Testæ osseæ mensura.

	unc.	lin.
Testæ dorsalis longitudo	6	6
———— latitudo	6	4
Sterni longitudo	6	4
—— latitudo	7	4

Of this beautiful and hitherto undescribed species of *Trionyx*, I obtained some time since a living specimen which had been brought from Sierra Leone. I was at first doubtful whether it might not be considered as a variety of *Tr. ægyptiacus*, as the form and the markings have considerable resemblance, although the colours differ materially. The situation and form of the sternal callosities are also, in a great measure, similar. Having had drawings made from the upper and under sides during life, I determined on sacrificing the soft parts after death, for the sake of obtaining a perfect skeleton; and I then found that the characters of the bony shell exhibited the most marked differences from the species above alluded to, and indeed from all others. Independently, then, of the distinctions in the colour of the skin, we find that the first dorsal vertebra, or, as Mr. Gray has very well named it, the *os nuchale*, is separated from the bony shell, in which respect it differs from *Tr. ægyptiacus* and *Tr. javanicus*; from both of which also, as well as from *Tr. subplanus*, it is readily distinguished by the extent of the free portion of the ribs, which is nearly equal in length to the connected part which forms the solid shell. From the osseous parts of *Tr. carinatus*, as figured by Geoffroy, its distinction is not at first sight so obvious; but, upon examination, it will be found that even the bony shell affords sufficient characters to show that it is specifically distinct. The callous portion of the *os nuchale* is proportionally much longer and larger in the present species. The anterior calli of the sternum in *Tr. carinatus* are nearly half as broad again at the inner part as at the outer; in *Tr. labiatus* they are nearly of the same breadth throughout. The toothed margins of the sternal bones are also much more divided, as well as very differently formed in the latter. But in the character from which the approximating species has

been named, the difference is still more striking. So far from having any appearance of carina, the dorsum of *Trionyx labiatus* is much depressed, its height, independent of the rest of the skeleton, not exceeding one sixth of its breadth, whereas in *carinatus* it is not less than a quarter.

As the specimen was in good health and very active when I received it, I hoped that it might have been preserved for a considerable time, and have thus enabled me to watch its habits; a circumstance the more desirable, as it was the first instance of a Trionyx having been brought alive to this country. It died however after I had kept it a few weeks, and I had been unable to get it to feed, though it would snap suddenly and violently at the finger or a stick, when held within a few inches of the mouth. On being placed in a large cistern of water, it instantly sought the bottom, where it usually remained, excepting at distant intervals, when it came to the surface to breathe. It was evident that its habit was to conceal itself in the mud at the bottom of the water; for which its depressed form and the moveable and extended coriaceous margin of the body are admirably calculated. A very thin layer of mud was thus sufficient to conceal it, and it made its way under it as rapidly, and almost in the same manner, as a flounder or a plaice. That such is the ordinary place of its habitation is also probable from a fact mentioned to me by Colonel Sykes. This gentleman found in the stomachs of several of this genus, which he had procured from the Ganges, a large quantity of Uniones, the shells of which were broken into small angular fragments, though still covering the animals and attached to the mantle. This would appear to indicate that these animals live upon food which is to be found stationary, or nearly so, at the bottom of the rivers in which they reside, whereas the other groups of the fresh-water tortoises pursue their prey, which consists of fish, frogs, and even the young of aquatic birds.